

1. A mammographic compression device comprising:
 - a substantially planar image detector extending along a horizontal plane;
 - a compression paddle selectively moveable vertically toward and away from the image detector along a guide, said compression paddle having
 - a first planar compression surface extending from the chest wall end of the compression paddle, said first planar compression surface extending less than about one inch from the chest wall end;
 - a third planar compression surface spaced no more than an inch from the first planar compression surface, said third planar compression surface forming an angle relative to the first compression surface in a range of one hundred seventy three to one hundred seventy-nine degrees.
2. The mammographic compression device of claim 1 further comprising:
 - a second planar compression surface extending from the end of the first planar compression surface less than about one inch , said second planar compression surface forming an angle relative to the first compression surface of about one hundred seventy eight degrees.
3. The mammographic compression device of claim 1 further comprising a lip at a chest wall end of the compression paddle.
4. The mammographic compression device of claim 3 wherein the lip is planar and angled at about ninety two degrees relative to the first compression surface.

5. The mammographic compression device of claim 1 further comprising a frame connected to the compression paddle.
6. The mammographic compression device of claim 5 wherein the paddle is fixedly connected to the support frame.
7. The mammographic compression device of claim 1 wherein the first compression surface is angled at about a two degree down angle relative to a parallel plane to the image detector.
8. The mammographic compression device of claim 1 wherein the first compression surface extends about three quarters of an inch from the chest wall end of the compression paddle.
9. The mammographic compression device of claim 2 wherein the second compression surface extends about one half inch intermediate the first and third compression surfaces.
10. A mammographic compression device comprising:
 - a breast support plate;
 - a compression paddle moveable relative to the breast support plate, said compression paddle having a first compression surface beginning at a chest wall end of the paddle, said first compression surface being planar and extending less than about an inch away from the chest wall end of the paddle, a second compression surface being planar, angled at about one hundred seventy eight degrees relative to the first compression surface and extending less than about an

inch, and a third compression surface angled relative to the second compression surface at about one hundred seventy eight degrees.

11. The device of claim 10 wherein the first compression surface is angled at about two degrees down from a horizontal plane.

12. The device of claim 11 wherein the compression paddle further comprises a lip at the chest wall end which extends substantially perpendicularly to the horizontal plane.

13. The device of claim 12 wherein the breast support plate is planar and located substantially perpendicularly to a plane extending through the lip of the paddle.

14. The device of claim 11 wherein the compression paddle is a formed plastic product.

15. The device of claim 10 further comprising a frame connected to the compression paddle, said frame imparting force to the compression paddle to compress a breast intermediate the paddle and the breast support plate.

16. The device of claim 15 wherein the frame is connected to sides of the paddle.

17. A mammographic compression device comprising:
a substantially planar breast support plate extending along a horizontal plane;

a compression paddle selectively moveable vertically toward and away from the breast support plate along a guide, said compression paddle having

a lip at a chest wall end of the compression paddle;

a first planar compression surface extending from the chest wall end of the compression paddle, said first planar compression surface extending less than about one inch from the chest wall end;

a second compression surface extending from the end of the first planar compression surface less than about one inch; and

a third planar compression surface extending from the end of the second planar compression surface to a nipple end of the compression paddle, said third planar compression surface forming an angle relative to the first compression surface in a range of one hundred seventy-three to one hundred seventy-nine degrees.

18. The mammographic compression device of claim 17 wherein the second compression surface has a concave portion.

19. The mammographic compression device of claim 17 wherein the second compression surface is planar and the angle intermediate the first and second compression surfaces is about one hundred seventy eight degrees.

20. A mammographic compression device comprising:
a breast support plate; and

a compression paddle having a lip at a chest wall end of the paddle, a first compression surface beginning at the chest wall end of the paddle, said first compression surface being concave and extending less than about 2 inches from the chest wall end of the paddle, and a second planar compression surface extending from the first concave compression surface to a nipple end of the compression paddle wherein a plane extending through the second planar compression surface forms an angle with the lip of between about 92 and about 98 degrees.

21. The mammographic compression device of claim 20 wherein the concave compression surface has a radius of about five inches.

22. The mammographic compression device of claim 20 wherein the concave compression surface is a parabolic curve.